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Asatru

Rathulvf Jamieson

Asatru is a term virtually unknown outside pagan circles. It's the pagans who have no idea what Asatru is that believe that it has any connection with the Nazis. Maybe you need to explain in more detail what Asatru is?? I'd be interested in that myself.

Greetings, Adrienne. I know that Grendel will answer this, however maybe a literal translation won't hurt either. Simply put from a historical view, Asatru is a combination of two words:

Ase, pl. Ases [pron. `ace']: The gods and goddesses of consciousness in the Teutonic pantheon, governing the powers of sovereignty and physical force (ON Ass; AEsir).

troth: Religion, being loyal to the gods, goddesses and cultural values of the ancestors (ON tru, OE treowth).
true: Adjective form of "troth," can mean "loyal." A "true man" is a man loyal to the gods and goddesses of his ancestors.

The word is a compound of asa-, "of the gods (aesir)," and -tru, usually translated as "faith." But this can be misleading. Tru is derived from the same root (deru-) that gave rise to "troth," "truth," "trust," and "true" in English. The root word "deru-" really has to do with something firm, solid, and steadfast. The fact that the word "tree" also comes from this word is significant as well. Therefore it is clear that originally the term had more of the connotations of our "true" (loyal), "trusting," and "troth" than with the connotations of "faith" or "belief."

"Belief is the acceptance through an external authority that a given thing is true, and perhaps that some form of "salvation" is dependent on this belief. Troth is based on experience. One trusts that the sun will come up tomorrow because this recurring phenomenon has been experienced in the past. The things that one is commanded to believe in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Marxism, etc., are precisely those things one can not experience, or those things known only to pastors, popes, rabbis, imams, commissars, etc. "To trust" therefore is to gain personal experience of the truth of a thing. The term asatru therefore most literally means "gaining experience of the ancestral sovereign gods."

Thorsson, Edred. "A Book of Troth." St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1989

This is what I based my belief on, even before I discovered Thorsson's books. I just didn't know the "historical" meaning of the word. I did, however, know the beauty of Asatru (the Troth) even though it was twisted by others. I hung in there, and enjoy one of the greater "freedoms of religion" today because of it.

Urdhr, Verdhandi, Skuld!

So is was, so it is, so it shall be!

Rathulvf

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